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Executive Registry
72-1914

31 JAN 1972

MEMORANDUM FOR: Executive Director-Comptroller

SUBJECT: Revitalization of U.S. Countersubversive Efforts Abroad

REFERENCE: Memo for DDP, et al., dated 3 January 1972  
[redacted], with attachment, Draft Memo  
for the Director, Subject: Countersubversion -  
A Continuing CIA Responsibility [redacted]

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1. The Chief, [redacted] Counterintelligence Staff have assisted me in the preparation of the following comments on your appreciation of the counter-subversion problem and suggested courses of action.

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2. First, we are in general agreement with:

a. Your estimate of the continuing threat of subversion to U.S. interests in many countries throughout the world, and of the need for a selective, low key, low cost but effective response to that threat based on a coordinated strategy.

b. Your view that while there are in fact ongoing counter-subversion and counterinsurgency programs, there is room for improved coordination and direction at the Washington level. There are established means at the Washington and Mission levels for coordinating both overt and covert responses to specific situations -- IRG's, CASP, WSAG, and so on. There is also a measure of exchange of views and sharing of doctrine in orientation and training programs.

c. Your assertion that CIA should continue to play an important but not an exclusive role, and that it would be useful to define more clearly the responsibilities of the several U.S. departments and agencies concerned with countersubversion.

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d. Your view that there should be an updated intelligence community analysis of the threat in order (1) to identify and describe in suitable order of priority those countries in which a serious subversive threat exists and which are of continuing importance to the U.S. interest, and (2) to re-evaluate the capabilities of each of these countries to recognize and cope with the threat of their will, their means, their organization for management of their counter-subversion effort, and their relationships with the U.S. and other countries with regard to possible assistance and/or cooperation.

e. Your definition of countersubversion in terms of six areas of effort -- collection of intelligence, assessment of subversive forces and their capabilities and intentions, institutional barriers to subversion, countersubversion forces and programs, information, and the rule of law.

f. Your identification of the central role and special potentials of foreign police services not only for purposes of counter-subversion but also for information collection, counterintelligence and covert political action.

3. While we agree in large measure with your overview, we do have reservations as to the real practicability at this time of raising the politically tender issue of subversion and counter-subversion as a priority problem at the NSC or even interagency level. Our reasoning is based on the following:

a. After nearly ten years of "counterinsurgency" involvement it seems to us that the national inclination nowadays is to turn away from this subject and all its elements and forms. While this may be due to the frustration of Vietnam, we find U.S. support of "repressive" foreign police forces generally being challenged as counter to the national interest and heritage and U.S. Government sponsored "stability operations" often characterized by the media as "support to military dictatorships."

b. In our experience, the promulgation of a broadly comprehensive NSC action and "doctrine" for countersubversion will not necessarily and of themselves guarantee coordinated (much less integrated) and successful program accomplishment. Very much the

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same route has been taken in the past without lasting effect, even to changing the name of the game from counterinsurgency to internal defense to stability operations. We believe many countries see in Vietnam a failure of U.S. countersubversion and do not welcome our long-advertised "expertise" in this field; others judge U.S. assistance politically inexpedient or counterproductive.

✓  
? c. With regard to U.S. relationships with foreign police forces, there appears to be no current need for the NSC to task U.S. Mission Chiefs for a special, comprehensive report. The requisite information is or should be readily available in Washington as a consequence of regular reporting by the intelligence community and various assistance programs and which have been reflected in the various NIE's, SNIE's, NIS chapters, special studies, memoranda, and reports.

✓  
d. With respect to intelligence information collection, the proposed new DCID 1/2, "U.S. Intelligence Objectives and Priorities," contains specific requirements relating both to "pre-insurgency situations" and "active insurgencies," as well as other relevant political and military reporting objectives.

✓  
e. Since in the final analysis successful countersubversion is a function of adequate operational intelligence and its timely and effective exploitation, we perhaps should -- before going outside the Agency -- look at our own capabilities for collection, for counteraction, for coordination, and for the exercise of leadership in this field.

✓  
f. While we share your appreciation of the first lesson of Vietnam, to defeat subversion before it erupts into insurgency and military action, we view countersubversion as practically inseparable from intelligence collection and counterintelligence in the broadest sense. We also believe that countersubversion must be conducted within a country essentially "by its own forces in their own way consistent with the national character and situation," and this impinges directly on our peculiar operational relationships and liaisons with foreign police and security services.

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5. While there is still room for improvements in the CS countersubversion program (see attached), this is largely a function of people and training. In terms of people, we are -- in my opinion -- already fully extended. We are still heavily engaged in Southeast Asia, and at the same time are in the throes of readjusting our manpower both to reductions in overall personnel strength and to realignments to meet new requirements and new ways of doing our overseas job in an increasingly hostile operating environment. In terms of possible future increases in our countersubversion effort,

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6. With regard to doctrine and training, we have sought to learn from the "counterinsurgency" experience and to improve our operational capabilities, not only to cope with subversion but also to anticipate it, and have over the past few years published a number of briefs and Special Operations Notes for field use. In addition, individuals programmed for assignments to Southeast Asia have usually received an introduction to internal security forces operations. All of these measures recognize the need for increased sophistication and for giving primary attention to the pre-insurgency phase of countersubversion and to the identification and penetration of subversive targets both for purposes of intelligence collection and neutralization of the subversive forces. We recognize that more needs to be done, and [Redacted] and our Senior Staffs and Area Divisions are keenly aware of the problem. We are also giving special heed to the related problems of urban terrorism, our new responsibilities in the field of narcotics and dangerous drugs, and also certain aspects of coordination of U.S. relationships with foreign police and internal security services which need tidying up.

7. In sum, then, while I agree in principle with your estimate of the subversive threat and the need for a U.S. response to it, I suggest that we defer for the moment taking this to the NSC,

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✓ and that we concentrate our efforts on a systematic improvement of our capabilities in this field, calling upon DDI assistance as appropriate, and balancing these countersubversion efforts with other Clandestine Service operational requirements.



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Thomas H. Karamessines  
Deputy Director for Plans

Attachment  
As stated

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			DATE	DATE	
TO: (Officer designation, room number, and building)		RECEIVED	FORWARDED	OFFICER'S INITIALS	COMMENTS (Number each comment to show from whom to whom. Draw a line across column after each comment.)
1.	Chief, [redacted]	700	700		Concur: 25X1
2.					
3.	Chief, Counter Intelligence Staff 2 C 43	28 JAN 1972			Concur
4.					
5.	Deputy Director for Plans 3 C 24	21 JAN 1972	11		Signature
6.	Executive Director-Comptroller				
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